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Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

APR 30 1996

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

Mr. Robert Eastman
Member of Directors Guild of America
UPM/Assistant Director
5620 Hollywood Blvd.
Hollywood, CA 90028

Dear Mr. Eastman:

On behalf of Chairman Hundt, I would like to thank you for your recent letter regarding the presentation to the Commission of a recommendation for an Advanced Television standard.

On November 28, 1995 we received a report from the Commission's Advisory Committee on Advanced Television Services (ACATS) making its recommendation. This matter is currently still under consideration by the Commission, and no final decisions have been made. The FCC will be considering a total of at least three Notices on this issue which, when taken together, will provide a complete and current record on all aspects relating to the creation of our nation's digital broadcast service. The first of this trilogy was released August 9, 1995, in anticipation of the final report and recommendation made by ACATS. Comments were received in late November, and replies were due January 22, 1996.

We expect to release two more Notices this year. One will address the specific standard for transmission of digital television, which is the focus of your concerns. The other will take up the methodology of assigning channels for digital service to eligible parties. Through the process of notice, comment and reply, the Commission is able to consider a wide variety of proposals.

Many computer enthusiasts are concerned, and rightfully so, about the impact the standard's adoption would have on scanning formats. One such format is progressive scanning, typically used on computer monitors, which is preferable for still images or high resolution graphics. The other is interlace, typically used in analog television sets, which many feel is more appropriate for preserving consumer's access to the vast body of work already created for television. Similarly, many in the cinematic community, such as yourself, have expressed concerns regarding the appearance of their work on the small screen of television, whether it be today's 4:3 aspect ratio or the proposed wide screen 16:9 dimensions. Please take note that all permutations of scanning modes and aspect ratios are supported by the standard recommended by the ACATS, and would not prevent the development, use and eventual proliferation of progressive displays. In fact, of the 18 proposed format permutations in the ACATS recommendation, 14 are for progressive displays.

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As to the presentation of existing 4:3 video programming on a 16:9 display, for those who choose such a system, the receivers will adjust the picture to fill the screen in a manner most pleasing to the consumer. This may mean black bars on the edges of the screen, automatic cropping of the top and bottom or even the use of "pan and scan" to fill the screen according to the cinematographer's artistic vision and the broadcaster's decisions on how to present the material. And for the consumers who choose to purchase less costly 4:3 receivers, or use set-top convertors with their existing sets, similar options will be available to best fill the screens to their preference.

As you are well aware, the issues raised in this proceeding are many and complex, and I regret I am unable to do them all justice in a short letter. In addition to those at Apple and the ASC with whom you agree on this issue, I would encourage you to get more information from Mr. Stan Baron, President of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers at 914-761-1100 or 212-664-7557. Stan has been integrally involved in these matters for many years and will be able to present a well balanced perspective on all issues of concern to you. If you would care to discuss this further with me, please feel free to call my office at 202-418-2600.

Rest assured that this proceeding, far from being over, has in many respects just begun. The Commission welcomes and encourages you to actively participate in this process and to share your concerns so that we may make the best decision in the interest of all Americans.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Saul T. Shapiro", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Saul T. Shapiro
Assistant Bureau Chief
for Technology Policy

HOT SHOTS, INC.

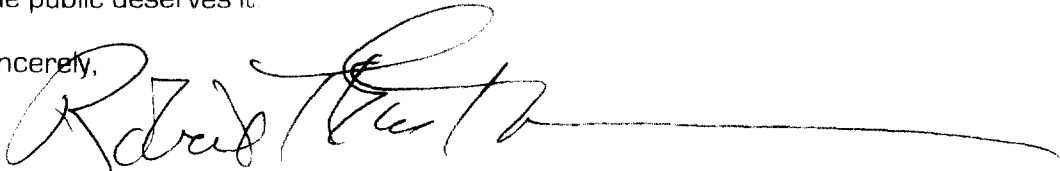
March 12, 1996

Mr. Reed Hundt
Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission
1919 M. Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Mr. Hundt,

I am writing to you because I oppose the ACATS proposal. I am concerned that the 'grand alliance' plan which was formulated and submitted to you has had almost no input from motion picture and television directors and cinematographers. The plan was formulated by engineers and representatives from large corporations without the creators of the images having a say in the way those images are delivered to the public. I feel this will denigrate the quality of TV Broadcasting. They are also proposing a 'interlaced' display system proven to be archaic and inferior. I, along with the ASC and Apple Computers, support a 'progressive scan' system, using the proven technology of computer screens. The next generation television system should be compatible with computers and show the whole image as we composed it. The public deserves it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Eastman", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Robert Eastman
Member of Directors Guild of America
UPM/ Assistant Director